



LOS ANGELES COUNTY COMMISSION FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

Celebrating 27 Years of Advocacy & Achievement

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October 17, 2011

To: Supervisor Michael D. Antonovich, Mayor
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From: Patricia Curry, Chair
Los Angeles County Commission for Children and Families

**RE: MENTAL HEALTH TRANSITION AGE YOUTH (TAY)
WORKGROUP**

We are writing to you about an exciting collaboration between the Commission for Children and Families (Commission) and the Department of Mental Health (DMH). This collaboration has resulted in very positive results.

About a year ago a small group, the Mental Health Workgroup, comprised of seven (7) Commissioners, began looking into the Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) Programs for Transition Age Youth (TAY), ages 16 to 24. We were particularly concerned because this is such a vulnerable group, and we feared no one was watching out for them. We were quite concerned over the "unspent funds" and the "prudent reserve funds" in the Community Services and Supports (CSS) TAY Plan, and will be joining the Self-Sufficiency Workgroup to discuss further.

We met and collaborated with Dr. Robin Kay, Chief Deputy Director of DMH, and other members of her team, as well as some members of the Mental Health Commission. The representatives from DMH discussed the difficulty they encountered with the Prevention and Early Intervention (PEI) funding rollout because of the requirement to include new providers who previously did not have a contract with the County. We suggested that based on the successful outcomes of the Prevention Initiative Demonstration Project (PIDP) Program that DMH consider outreach to the PIDP providers so that their programs might be enhanced through the use of PEI funding, should they successfully participate in the PEI solicitation. The DMH agreed that this would be consistent with the County PEI Plan that had been developed.

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DMH worked with Department of Children and Families and providers in the PIDP networks to ensure that the PIDP providers be included in the solicitation and receive specific instructions for getting on the DMH MHSA Master Agreement List so that they will be eligible to apply. Finally, in November, this Request for Information (RFI) for PEI contracts and services will be released.

Perhaps our most important contribution pertained to youth who are on probation in the community living either with parents or relatives, not in camps or halls. DMH included language in the solicitation to establish prevention efforts with youth in the community at risk of juvenile justice involvement, who have had probation involvement but are not incarcerated, as a priority population. Approximately 16,000 probation youth in the community will be eligible for services in the roll-out of these new PEI programs.

In addition, DMH and the Workgroup agreed to work on ways to assess client satisfaction in addition to traditional measurements of outcome. We are also working on a model for focus groups and other avenues for making contact with the TAY population.

In summary, it is this collaboration between a Commission and a Department that accomplished so much and which could be a model for so many other groups working to better our County.

PC:SF:ma

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Director, Department of Mental Health
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Health Deputies
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Ms. Robin Kay, Chief Deputy Director
Department of Mental Health
Chair, Mental Health Commission